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22. A guide wire comprising:
an elongate core composed of a nickel-titanium alloy and including a length and a distal portion;
a unitary coil composed of a second material and that surrounds a substantial portion of the length of the core and extends distal of the distal portion of the core; and
a tip composed of a polymeric material and extending from a distal end of the coil.
23. The guide wire of claim 22 wherein the coil surrounds a portion of the core near a proximal end of the core.
24. The guide wire of claim 23 wherein the coil surrounds the proximal end of the core.
25. The guide wire of claim 22 wherein the coil surrounds the entire length of the core.
26. The guide wire of claim 22 wherein the coil extends along the length of the core from the portion of the core near the proximal end of the core to a portion of the core near a distal end of the core.
28. The guide wire of claim 22 wherein the second material comprises stainless steel.
29. The guide wire of claim 22 wherein the second material comprises a precipitation hardenable alloy.
30. The guide wire of claim 22 wherein the distal portion of the core is tapered.
32. The guide wire of claim 22 wherein the tip includes a radio-opaque material.
33. The guide wire of claim 22 wherein the coil comprises a pitch that varies at least once along the length of the core.

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34. The guide wire of claim 22 wherein the coil comprises a coating.
35. The guide wire of claim 34 wherein the coating is lubricious.
36. The guide wire of claim 34 wherein the coating is colored.
37. The guide wire of claim 22 wherein the coil comprises a rectangular cross-section.
38. The guide wire of claim 22 wherein the coil comprises a circular cross-section.
39. The guide wire of claim 22 wherein the coil comprises a multifilar wire.
40. The guide wire of claim 39 wherein the multifilar wire is cross-wound.
41. A guide wire comprising:
a core including a length and a distal portion;
a unitary coil that surrounds a substantial portion of the length of the core and extends distal of the distal portion of the core; and
a tip composed of a polymeric material and extending from a distal end of the coil.
42. The guide wire of claim 41 wherein the coil surrounds a portion of the core near a proximal end of the core.
43. The guide wire of claim 42 wherein the coil surrounds the proximal end of the core.
44. The guide wire of claim 41 wherein the coil surrounds the entire length of the core.
45. The guide wire of claim 41 wherein the coil extends along the length of the core from the portion of the core near a proximal end of the core to distal of the distal portion of the core.
46. The guide wire of claim 41 wherein the distal portion of the core is tapered.
48. The guide wire of claim 41 wherein the tip comprises a radio-opaque material.

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49. The guide wire of claim 41 wherein the coil comprises a pitch that varies at least once along the length of the core.

50. The guide wire of claim 41 wherein the coil comprises a coating.

51. The guide wire of claim 50 wherein the coating is lubricious.

52. The guide wire of claim 50 wherein the coating is colored.

53. The guide wire of claim 41 wherein the coil comprises a rectangular cross-section.

54. The guide wire of claim 41 wherein the coil comprises a circular cross-section.

55. The guide wire of claim 41 wherein the coil comprises a multifilar wire.

56. The guide wire of claim 55 wherein the multifilar wire is cross-wound.